United Nations A/50/PV.14

# General Assembly

Official Records

Fiftieth Session

14th plenary meeting
Monday, 2 October 1995, 10 a.m.
New York

*President*: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Reyn (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

**Agenda item 9 (*continued*)**

**General debate**

**Address by Mr. Janez Drnovšek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia**

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly will first hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia.

*Mr. Janez Drnovšek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, His Excellency Mr. Janez Drnovšek, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

**Mr. Drnovšek** (Slovenia): It is a great pleasure to see Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral presiding over the important proceedings of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that under his guidance this session will be a great success.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations gives us a reason and an opportunity to reflect on the state of the United Nations and on the question of its ability to adjust to a changing world. This is especially necessary in our times. We have witnessed in the short span of the last few years a variety of changes which have affirmed the global nature of all the basic issues facing mankind.

An array of United Nations conferences and summits has strengthened our common awareness of the global nature of environmental and development issues, including those related to social development. The world-wide tendency towards democracy and the freedom of the individual has strengthened the world-wide cause of human rights. The notion of our common security is being redefined and globalized. It now contains not only military and political, but also economic, social and environmental components.

This session of the General Assembly began less than two weeks after the conclusion of the Fourth World Conference on Women. That conference amply demonstrated the depth and the global nature of the changes that are at hand. The equality of women and the realization of the human rights of women are now among the priority issues on the international agenda.

The United Nations has highlighted the sensitivity of the organized international community to the crucial issues facing the world and the Organization's ability to provide a framework for articulating the main objectives and commitments. It has also demonstrated the ability to

95-86160 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one month of the date of the meeting*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

formulate principal policy objectives. On the other hand, however, the United Nations has yet to prove its ability to organize effective international cooperation for the realization of voluntary, agreed objectives and commitments. This is a more difficult task, and much is left to be desired in our fulfilment of it.

Furthermore, it is in this context that the question of reform of the United Nations system arises. Reforms are needed to respond to profound changes in international relations and should be much more far-reaching and carefully focused than is currently the case. So, for example, reforms in the economic and social domains should duly take into account the transformation of the world economy and the ever growing importance of market forces, private-initiative entrepreneurship and free trade. In these circumstances there is no place for the creation of unnecessary supra-State structures. What is needed, however, is carefully targeted operational cooperation for development and high-level dialogue capable of assisting Member States to formulate the most effective economic and social policies.

The functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council should become places where decision makers both from Governments and from non-governmental sectors meet and devise specific strategies. New schemes of cooperation among governmental and non-governmental sectors are needed, not least to develop appropriate models for financing the relevant priorities in the fields of environment and social development.

Careful thinking and responsible action are necessary for the strengthening of international peace and security. Each of the diverse priorities in this domain will require serious efforts if satisfactory solutions are to be possible. However, there are also fears that the will to reach them has not yet been mobilized.

Another priority area of United Nations action for the strengthening of international peace and security concerns the necessary reform of the principal United Nations body in this field, the Security Council. An awareness of the need to strengthen the representative character and the effectiveness of the Security Council through expansion of its membership is now generally shared. Slovenia is among those Members of the United Nations which support the idea of appropriate expansion of the number of both permanent and non-permanent seats on the Security Council. This is the majority view now. Furthermore, we believe that in order to reflect adequately the political and economic realities of our time it is important that Germany and Japan should become permanent members of the Security Council.

In the framework of the proposed reform, we should ask ourselves what the future role of the United Nations ought to be. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, after the disappearance of the communist bloc, there is a new situation in the world. The process is basically positive, but in the first years after the big change there are still many questions to be answered. The world must find new stability, a new balance. The danger of regional conflicts and wars has increased. The international community did not find adequate responses to specific situations, such as those in Somalia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

But we cannot simply say that international institutions, including the United Nations, were inefficient in dealing with these situations. The humanitarian endeavour and contribution were significant. Many remarkable efforts were put into solutions — efforts by individuals and by institutions. But it remains clear that the world must find answers to the new challenges.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a very good example. It is an important case in itself, but it is also a very important precedent to be considered in the future. The response of the world to the situation in the former Yugoslavia was slow. Preventive diplomacy failed in this case, as in many other crises, as a result of the normal behaviour of the majority of politicians, who usually give priority to domestic situations and problems. But in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina there is another very important dimension of the problem: a solution or the absence of a solution will influence the future.

How will the post-cold-war world develop? Will there be efficient international coordination, mainly within the United Nations, to take care of such problems and crises? Or shall we go back to the old division of the world and of Europe: the division, in interest spheres, among classic Powers — the traditional interest spheres of the most important countries?

It is obvious that in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina there was some mix of the two approaches. There was an international effort in the framework of the United Nations, and there were differences among some power States with different opinions about the situation. Bosnia and Herzegovina is where the First World War started, when the old European Powers tried to expand their interest zones. The former Yugoslavia was at the

crossroads of many interests and is where so many horrors and killings took place during the Second World War. And there are some signs that the international community has not yet completely overcome such historical divisions and influences.

On the other hand, we cannot say that this historical approach prevailed in tackling the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There was also strong international action in the name of the universal order and universal values, in the name of the protection of human rights, in the name of the protection of the rights of all nations. It is very encouraging that we recently witnessed really serious activity, a very serious peace plan. Diplomatic activity combined with the necessary military action has for the first time provided a realistic chance to stop the war and the killing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to establish a durable peace and the prospect of stability in the region.

If these activities succeed, they will be an extremely important model for the future, for further development of international coordination in the framework of the United Nations. If the international community is able to solve such an extremely difficult case as that of Bosnia and Herzegovina we shall all be encouraged to direct new energy and efforts towards establishing global instruments and activities to prevent and to solve future crises. The international community will strengthen its institutions in support of universal values and rights.

If it fails in this case the situation will be just the opposite. The road will be open to anarchy, chaos and regional wars, to the rule of the stronger, to the old practices of spheres of interest, and the world will not find a way out of the post-cold-war situation. Instability will increase, and the chances of regional and global wars will be greater.

So we are at a very important moment in history and in the functioning of the United Nations. If the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is celebrated with success in finally solving the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, this will be the best reward for everybody who, over the past 50 years, has sacrificed his time, his energy or even his life for the establishment of a world of freedom, stability and international cooperation.

Of course, there are many problems to be solved in the future. The United Nations will have to develop efficient instruments of preventive diplomacy and means of handling crises if they occur anyway and of defining the criteria as to when and how to intervene. As is very evident from the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is not always easy to achieve a unanimous definition of "the bad guys" in the world order or to agree upon action against them. But there are human rights criteria, and there are universal values that were developed in the world over the centuries, and especially during recent decades. These have to be respected and implemented.

Luckily, Slovenia was out of the Yugoslav crisis at a very early stage and established its independence four years ago. Now we have a very prosperous State with good democratic performance and very good economic development. Slovenia is considered one of the best countries, if not the best country, in transition to the market and democratic system. We are also prepared to make our contribution to building the international institutions and the coordination that will lead to greater stability in the world. We see our future as being in international institutions like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union. We look upon such bodies not only as economic or defence institutions but also as institutions that should ensure greater stability in the world, greater democracy and the development of universal principles of individual and collective human rights.

But we can see that the way is not easy. Even in our own neighbourhood we face some remnants of the past. This is just one further reason for our insistence on respect by everybody, and not just by the smaller and the weaker countries, for principle in international relations, democracy and universal values. This is the only guarantee of international peace and stability. Clearly, if we start to correct the past and the present on the basis of some historical tendencies of domination, there will be no way of securing the future stability of the world. The solution lies only in overcoming such practices and attitudes and in establishing international cooperation, peace and stability on the basis of respect for each other and for universal human rights.

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia for the important statement he has just made.

*Mr. Janez Drnovsek, Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**The President** (*interpretation from French*): The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, upon whom I call.

**Mr. Peres** (Israel): I should like to congratulate Mr. Freitas do Amaral on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. We are glad that a representative of Portugal, a nation for which Israel has high regard, was elected to that distinguished post.

I would like to express to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, a man of our region and a man of peace, our deepest appreciation for his contribution to world peace in general and to the Middle East peace in particular.

Tomorrow, the Jewish people will pray on the day of *Yom Ha-Kippurim*:

(*spoke in Hebrew; English text furnished by the delegation*)

> "In the Book of Life: blessings, peace, a good livelihood, good decrees, salvation and consolation. May you be remembered and inscribed."

(*spoke in English*)

We pray for all humanity, for the whole world.

For us, the United Nations is not just a place of prayer and surely not a platform for speeches. We come here to state our convictions and to announce our commitments. In our address in 1987, I stated on behalf of the State of Israel:

> "We have found President Mubarak of Egypt to be a builder of a better life for his people and of bridges for a comprehensive peace in the region." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Plenary Meetings, 17th meeting, p. 23-25)*

Today, under the leadership of President Mubarak, Egypt is becoming a centre for regional development on the way to hosting the first regional bank of development.

In the same address, we stated:

> "An international conference is the door to direct negotiations. Once convened it should lead immediately to face-to-face bilateral negotiations." *(Ibid., p. 26)*

On 30 October, 1991, the Madrid Conference took place.

In 1992, again we declared:

> "The opportunity to select, through democratic political elections, the Palestinian administrative council will enable the Palestinian people to exercise a double measure of freedom: the freedom to govern their own lives and to do so ... democratically." *(Ibid., Forty-seventh Session, Plenary Meetings, 20th meeting, p. 48)*

Last week, we achieved wnat we promised.

Lastly, in 1993, we declared again from this rostrum:

> "Geographically speaking, we live side by side with the Jordanian Kingdom, and what is so obvious geographically must become clear politically [so that] we can offer the people of both sides of the river full peace, that the Dead Sea can become a spring of new life." *(Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Plenary Meetings, 6th meeting, p. 22)*

In October 1994, just one year later, Jordan and Israel signed a peace treaty.

Last year, we said here:

> "All countries of the Middle East face a choice: to remain politically divided and economically stagnant or to become economically advanced and politically just.
>
> "... We shall try to establish instruments for development: a regional bank, channels for private investment and a framework for regional planning." *(Ibid., Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 10th meeting, p. 16)*

In October 1994, the first Middle East-North African economic summit was held in Casablanca under the splendid presidency of His Majesty King Hassan II. At the end of this month, a second summit will be held in Amman under the auspices of His Majesty King Hussein. At the end of November, the first ground-breaking Euro-Mediterranean conference will be held in Barcelona.

Three years, five promises: all of them fulfilled. I would like to use this occasion to turn to the Syrians and to turn to the Lebanese and ask them to stop hesitating, to stop wandering. They have to look at this record and come in and follow up. The President of Syria has said that from experience he has learned that only through military negotiations and making security the major

agenda item can one achieve peace. Sorry: Experience has shown that through negotiation on all levels, embracing all issues without timidity, without fatigue, we can achieve peace. If leaders meet and are not successful at the first meeting, they will have another meeting. How can it be wrong for them to work day and night, ceaselessly, with new ideas and new approaches? They are not wasting the leaders' time; they are wasting the time of the people — their fortunes, their happiness, opportunities for the younger generation.

We also tell all the countries of the Middle East, not that we want to have a new Middle East, but that we want the Middle East to join in a new age — for the good of their people, not for the good of Israel. Israel is in good shape because we are no longer living in a world where there are empires of power and colonies of poverty. Poverty and oppression are home-made, not imposed by others. The choice is before every country to become free and prosperous and democratic, like so many nations have done in a relatively short time in Asia, Latin America and in some countries of Africa. It is their choice, their opportunity not just to build a different world but to introduce the new world to their own people.

For us, the United States is not an empire of power. We are not afraid of the United States. For us, the United States is an empire of peace. We need the United States. For us, Russia is going through a process of change. Russia will remain great but will become something different. For us, we welcome the European contribution to other countries east and south of them and the convening of the Barcelona conference to offer the Mediterranean peoples funds and experience to build a new life. We are glad that Japan is expanding its economic horizons and understanding and contributing so that other nations can do so. And we hope that other well-to-do countries in the Middle East, including Arab countries, will help the needy parts of our own region.

May I say that in my best judgement the greatest danger is a combination of high technology and deep hatred, of modern instruments and feudalistic views, and the greatest hope for all of us is a double effort to respect human values and modern education.

Israel itself is in good shape. We are strong militarily: I do not deny it. We have an excellent economy — an economy of brains, not of material resources. We have absorbed a very large immigration of white and black Jews, white Jews from Russia and black Jews from Ethiopia, and nobody can understand what put Israel in such a relatively good position.

What brought this about is, first of all, the return to the moral choice. By the end of this year — at the latest at the beginning of next year — not one Palestinian will remain under our control. For the first time in the history of the Palestinian people, they are educating their children without intervention by us or anybody else. Nobody forces us to do so. We are not weak. We are not poor. We are not under pressure. We have had to take serious risks because terror still continues. The Arab boycott is still intact.

In our own country there is strong opposition to what we are doing. We have had to spend a great part of our budget to make peace — and yet, despite all this, we decided to make a moral choice: not to dominate another people. We stated in this Assembly that that was our intention. Now we have done it and even politically, as difficult as it may be at home — because, as a party, we may win historically but we may also lose politically — but then, winning peace is in our eyes more important than winning elections. Why should you be elected if you do not use the mandate of the people to change the course of your history in a reasoned, moral way?

We believe that the strength of ethical judgement is as important as military exercises or triumphs. We gave up land and produced instead an economy of brains. Today Israel is making out of its brains more than some other countries in our vicinity are making out of oil.

And what we actually expect from the Palestinians is for them to become democratic, to be prosperous, to fight violence and terror, and we are giving our neighbours a simple message: What we can do, everybody can do.

For many years there was a legend that only the North, which is white and wealthy and permanent, is a success story, whereas the South is condemned to backwardness, to poverty, to lagging behind. What has happened in Asia, where the most vibrant economic endeavours are taking place today, and what is happening in Latin America show that the economy has nothing to do with geographical location or the colour of the skin. Make the right choice: serve your people and create a new future.

What we are offering to anyone who is interested is our experience — open, in a comradely way. We do not

want to dominate anybody and certainly not anybody's economy. We did not give up the domination of people to gain domination of markets. And we are suggesting to our neighbours — and we are happy that they have accepted — is that the new frontiers — say, between Jordan and Israel — will not be frontiers of mines and hostile fences, but an occasion for joint ventures.

The whole rift of Africa, the whole valley which is a desert that separates the Jordanians and us will become, with God's help, a source for work, for development. We will build hotels and schools and desalination plants and parks, and people will be free to move from one side to the other, competing without hating, cooperating without dominating.

We want to do the same about the dividing line between us and the Palestinians: we want to build alongside the line on the West Bank and Gaza eight industrial parks so that the Palestinians will not have to cross the border and go through Israel's checkpoints: instead, work will come to them, and together we shall invest and together we shall develop.

A better economy is the best guarantee of peace. Actually, there cannot be economic cooperation without political understanding. Recently, while we were negotiating we created three zones of security sensibility on the West Bank — zone A, zone B and zone C. Then we turned to water and electricity and we asked the water and the current to submit to our political wisdom, but the electricity and the water people said that they did not distinguish between A, B and C. Water flows according to nature and not according to artificial agreements, and electric current does not stop at A or B or C. They serve everybody.

Today in the Middle East as elsewhere, the distinction is no longer ideological or religious or national. There is just one distinction between an old, poor, backward economy and a new age where economies are based on technology and science and where the natural resource is schools for the children and not the mines of the Gulf. Everybody can postpone the choice but nobody can escape it.

Our aim is to have peace so as to serve our people; to have education so as to equip our children to take advantage of the new age, to be equal to others and to compete with other children. It cannot remain a peace between leaders: it must become a peace for the people, now and in the future.

I started by showing what has happened in three or four short years. It is a revolution. It is a beginning. We should not stop in the middle. Let everybody pray to the Lord in the language he is used to. Let everybody respect his own tradition, his own heritage. Let everybody respect the special experience of a people, of a nation. But let all of us give up unnecessary hatred, untold suspicion. Let us give up barricading ourselves behind old dogmas and terrible prejudices. Let us help the people and the future. Then the 50 years of the United Nations will offer not just 50 years without war but the coming 50 years with peace and prosperity.

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, His Excellency Mr. Ali Alatas.

**Mr. Alatas** (Indonesia): On behalf of the Indonesian delegation I should like to offer our congratulations to Mr. Freitas do Amaral of Portugal on his election as President of the fiftieth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that under his able guidance we will make substantive progress in our work.

To his distinguished predecessor, Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire, I should like to convey our deep appreciation for the exemplary manner in which he presided over the Assembly at the last session.

I also wish to pay tribute to our esteemed Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his dedicated endeavours in pursuing the objectives of the United Nations Charter and for his untiring efforts for the cause of peace and development.

We observe the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations at a most crucial time in the history of humankind. In this post-cold-war era, we have been confronted by global changes so profound and massive that we are just beginning to understand some of their ramifications. These changes have generated challenges and contradictory trends in international relations which have cast a dark shadow on our contemporary world and intensified our sense of uncertainty as we stand on the threshold of a new century. On the other hand, a deepening sense of interdependence has prompted nations to devise more equitable and mutually beneficial patterns of cooperation — and this has provided us with a new source of hope. Fittingly indeed, on this fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, hope is the dominant feeling in the world today just as it was hope, for a more

peaceful and tolerant world, which inspired the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco half a century ago.

With the Second World War barely over, the international community of that time sought to establish a world organization which would "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" by instituting a system of collective security based on the repudiation of the use of force "save in the common interest", and on the basic principles of sovereign equality, freedom, justice and the rule of law. This splendid vision was not to be realized, for soon the cold war set in between two rival military and ideological blocs locked in a struggle for dominance. Power politics and the quest for hegemony and spheres of influence paralysed the collective security system. That may be why the United Nations has not been able to prevent the more than 150 armed conflicts which, since its founding, have erupted in various parts of the world, taking a horrible toll in human lives and material devastation. And that also partly explains the persistence of inequities and imbalances in international economic relations.

The United Nations was but a decade old when the first generation of leaders of Asia and Africa, reacting to the debilitating effects of the cold war and the problems besetting the world at the time, met in Bandung to articulate a new ethos which would reaffirm the ideals and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and govern relationships between and among nations, great and small. Thus in 1955 the leaders of Asia and Africa laid down the "*Dasa Sila* of Bandung" — the "Ten Principles of Bandung" — which embodied fundamental principles of inter-State relations in accordance with the spirit of the United Nations Charter.

The seeds that germinated in Bandung took firm root six years later in Belgrade with the formal institution of the Non-Aligned Movement. Since then, the Movement has served as a moral and political force that provided an alternative vision to the bloc politics of the cold war. Pursuing that vision, the Movement contributed to the triumph of such causes as the world-wide struggle against colonialism; the drive against institutionalized racism, particularly apartheid; the advocacy for nuclear disarmament, which is finally under way; and, lately, the launching of a global partnership for development. It is no coincidence that these are the very same issues as those on the agenda of the United Nations, for it is precisely within the United Nations and through its processes and institutions that the Non-Aligned Movement has waged its struggles for, and pursued its advocacy of, the principles and ideas enshrined in the United Nations Charter and reiterated in the *Dasa Sila* of Bandung. There is no doubt that the United Nations has served as the principal instrument for the amelioration of the human condition through the pursuit of peace and development.

In spite of the constraints to its system of collective security, the United Nations has nevertheless undertaken a large number of peace-keeping and peacemaking operations. Admittedly, not all United Nations peace-keeping efforts have been regarded as successful, but they have consistently promoted progress in negotiations between the parties in conflict. In the process the United Nations has expanded the meaning of peace-keeping beyond mere impartial interposition to include the protection of humanitarian aid, refugees and displaced persons as well as assistance to countries holding elections. Even the set-backs and difficulties encountered in peace-keeping operations have yielded useful insights that could help secure the success of similar undertakings in the future.

With the implementation of "An Agenda for Peace" and its Supplement, further progress may be expected, not only in peace-keeping but also in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, post-conflict peace-building and the complementary role of regional organizations in maintaining peace and security.

We are heartened that the Agenda for Peace has been complemented with "An Agenda for Development", which would not only enhance the capability of United Nations to do its work in the economic and social spheres but which will also facilitate the forging of a global partnership for development.

However, the United Nations is much more than a forum for maintaining security, resolving conflicts and keeping the peace. The Organization, its specialized agencies and related institutions have been engaged in an immense array of activities that touch every aspect of people's lives all over the world.

It is therefore most regrettable to note that the severest financial crisis in the history of the United Nations casts a dark shadow over the fiftieth anniversary. In particular, the failure of one major Member State to meet its obligations by withholding legally obligated contributions is not only contrary to Article 17 of the Charter but has also driven the Organization to the very brink of insolvency. This aggravating situation has forced the Secretary-General to try to resolve the crisis through

postponing reimbursements to the troop-contributing countries. This places an unfair burden on those countries and penalizes especially the developing countries among them. If the situation were to continue without urgent and effective measures being taken to resolve it, peace-keeping operations would grind to a halt and all our endeavours to maintain peace and security would be endangered. The fiftieth anniversary presents us with an opportunity to address this fundamental issue of the United Nations insolvency at the highest political level, including possible recourse to innovative global taxation schemes.

The achievements of the United Nations over the past five decades make a compelling case for the further strengthening of multilateral cooperation, and we believe that the United Nations can be an even better instrument of multilateral cooperation if we act with greater purpose and determination in rectifying its inadequacies and shortcomings through a comprehensive process of restructuring, revitalization and democratization.

My delegation is therefore gratified that steps have been taken to revitalize the role of the General Assembly, including the reorganization of its Committee structures and the streamlining of its agenda for greater efficiency and efficacy.

Indonesia also believes that the membership of the Security Council, including its permanent members, should be increased so as to reflect the changed international situation since 1945 and to accommodate the interests and concerns of developing countries, which comprise the overwhelming majority of the Organization. It is a glaring anomaly that on the roster of permanent members of the Council Europe is overrepresented, Asia is underrepresented and Africa and Latin America are not represented at all. We are also of the view that additional permanent members should be chosen on the basis, not only of equitable geographical representation, but also of such objective criteria as the political, economic and demographic weight of a country, its capability and proven track record of contributing to the promotion of peace, security and development, both regionally and globally, and its commitment to assume the responsibilities inherent in permanent membership. It may also be timely and pertinent to review the manner in which the veto is exercised at present with a view to mitigating its arbitrary use and to ensuring a more democratic decision-making process.

One central challenge not yet fully met by the United Nations in its fiftieth year is that of general disarmament, particularly in its nuclear dimension. The 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted three decisions, namely, to extend the Treaty indefinitely, to strengthen its review process and to agree on certain principles and objectives for non-proliferation and disarmament. Yet the Conference failed to address the inequalities inherent in the Treaty. Issues long identified as crucial components of the non-proliferation regime were marginalized. The indefinite extension of the NPT removed the element of urgency from obligations under article VI of the Treaty, which may legitimize existing nuclear arsenals and perpetuate their further modernization. Hence, our priority agenda in the disarmament field should continue to be one of seeking further deep reductions in those arsenals with a view to their ultimate, total elimination, curbing the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, banning the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes, ensuring the peaceful applications of nuclear technology on a predictable and long-term basis, initiating negotiations towards an international convention on security assurances to non-nuclear States, and concluding the ongoing negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.

It is in this context that we have deplored the underground testing by France and China, not only because of health and environmental considerations but precisely because it contravenes the spirit of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT and undermines the ongoing efforts to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty. While urging the nuclear Powers to desist from conducting further tests, we believe it is imperative that concerted efforts should now be directed at achieving a treaty banning nuclear testing in all environments and for all time, without any loopholes or exceptions, by 1996.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of recent times is that which has befallen the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The brutal aggression perpetrated again this independent Member State of the United Nations and the slaughter and "ethnic cleansing" of its people have shocked the whole world. Denied its legitimate right to defend itself as a result of an unjust arms embargo, Bosnia and Herzegovina faces the prospect of the forcible dismantling of its multicultural, multi-ethnic and multireligious society and the erosion of its internationally recognized sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity.

The major Powers, which early on could have put an end to this tragedy, have failed the cause of justice and of a principled solution, offering instead rationalizations for what clearly amounts to a policy of appeasement. Only now, after an excruciating wait, have the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) finally taken firm action. On the ground, the tide of battle seems to be turning, while at the same time a new peace process is unfolding which appears to have some viability. Indonesia welcomes the accords recently reached between the Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, comprised of a set of broad principles that are to govern a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Developments have thus entered a crucial stage, and it is of paramount importance for the international community to ensure that neither an unjust nor an unworkable peace be forced on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this regard, President Soeharto has offered Indonesia's good offices to facilitate a peace process based on direct negotiations among the leaders of the States directly involved in the conflict. These negotiations should be conducted on the basis of certain basic principles, such as peaceful coexistence and non-interference in internal affairs. Any settlement should take into account existing United Nations resolutions and existing proposals for settlement and should entail mutual recognition by the States that were components of the former Yugoslavia, respect for internationally recognized boundaries and protection of minorities. Furthermore, the process should proceed in stages, from direct negotiations between the leaders themselves to an appropriately structured international conference, to be held when agreement has been reached on the basic elements of a settlement.

In the Middle East the pursuit of peace has continued to gather momentum. The historic Declaration of Principles signed two years ago was bolstered by the agreement reached last week between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, which calls for an extension of Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories, phased withdrawal of Israeli forces and free elections for a Palestinian Council, thereby paving the way for a final settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indonesia welcomes the agreement as an important watershed in the Middle East peace process. But the path to a lasting peace still faces major hurdles and challenges, including those posed by Israeli settlements in the West Bank, the unresolved question of Palestinian refugees 50 years after they were forced to flee their homeland and the status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. At the same time, progress must also be achieved on the other tracks of the Arab-Israeli negotiations, which is a *sine qua non* for a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East question. The ultimate guarantee for a durable and just peace is Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories, including the Syrian Golan Heights and southern Lebanon.

The global economy today is reportedly at its strongest in many years. According to the World Economic and Social Survey of 1995, it has attained an average growth in output of 3 per cent per year. But the rising tide of production has not lifted all economies. Thus, notwithstanding the promise of global recovery, over 2 billion people remain poverty-stricken, often under circumstances of extreme deprivation. Up to 18 million die annually from hunger, malnutrition and poverty-related causes. The gap between the haves and the have-nots continues to widen, doubling in size over the past three decades between the richest 20 per cent and the poorest.

Policy decisions affecting the developing countries are increasingly being made by international agencies or groups, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Group of Seven. It even seems that the United Nations itself is being marginalized, as decision-making on international economic and financial issues continues to shift to the Bretton Woods institutions, where the participation of the developing countries is less equitable. It is no secret that some countries would like to inaugurate a global system in which finance and macroeconomic management become the exclusive domain of the IMF, development strategies that of the World Bank and international trade matters that of the WTO.

I submit, however, that given the expanding role of the developing countries in the world economy and the growing interdependence between States, the participation of developing countries should be enhanced rather than curtailed. The solution of global economic problems requires a global partnership for development, and that partnership cannot be forged without sustained dialogue and cooperation on key economic issues between the developed and the developing countries. This is why, after the Jakarta summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, where economic development was restored to the top of its agenda, the Movement sought to relaunch a constructive dialogue between the North and the South

based on mutual interest, common benefit and equitably shared responsibility. That kind of dialogue has been welcomed in this Assembly, and it is our hope that other key players in the globalization process, such as non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations and international financial institutions, will in time also join that dialogue.

Just as important is the revitalization of the institutions which the United Nations Charter set in place 50 years ago to lay the social and economic foundations for peace. We must ensure, however, that in the process we will strengthen the role of the developing countries in decision-making and enhance the democratic character of the United Nations.

It is in this context that I have opposed the idea of establishing an economic security council to take the place of the Economic and Social Council, because it is bound to frustrate our efforts to democratize the functioning of the United Nations. As to the attendant suggestion to wind up the work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), I believe, to the contrary, that these two bodies are vital to the achievement of accelerated, sustainable and equitably spread development, especially for the developing countries. Since its establishment 30 years ago, UNCTAD has consistently endeavoured to redress the inequities and imbalances in the world economy and to give a greater voice and role to the developing countries in its management. UNIDO, too, has proven to be of concrete benefit to the developing countries, in particular in their efforts to accelerate their industrial development. Both UNCTAD and UNIDO, therefore, should be strengthened rather than be allowed to be whittled down or eliminated.

We believe that the problems now plaguing many developing countries could have been forestalled if they had adequate access to international markets, to financial resources and to appropriate technologies. And while we expect that the results of the Uruguay Round will alleviate the crisis by liberalizing the international trading system, we also know that the lion's share of the benefits will accrue to the developed countries. This imbalance is due to the significant loss of differential treatment in trade for the developing countries, the limited progress achieved in lifting restrictions on agricultural exports and the imposition of trade conditionalities based on labour codes, eco-labelling and so on. If the new trading regime is to have a positive impact on the developing countries, these problems and imbalances should be squarely addressed, and the rights and interests of the developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, should be upheld.

Amid such trends as increasing globalization, the integration of global financial markets and speculation during periods of national adjustment to privatization, the developing countries have become increasingly vulnerable. Among the developing countries, those in Africa are particularly disadvantaged because their external-debt problems have virtually excluded them from investment flows — they must rely on official development assistance (ODA), which continues to decline. At the same time, negative financial flows continue to hamper their development efforts. In 1994 alone the continent's indebtedness was double that of other developing countries. It is therefore incumbent upon the international community to give its priority attention to the critical situation in Africa.

The World Summit for Social Development, convened earlier this year in Copenhagen, underscored the determination of the international community to raise global standards of living and to address the problems of poverty, unemployment and social integration. Its Declaration and Programme of Action offer a pragmatic and feasible course to alleviate mass human suffering and to elevate the human condition. Now we must translate rhetoric into action, and realize the true potential for global prosperity.

An integral part of that process is the implementation of the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, recently concluded in Beijing. For only through the empowerment and advancement of women by such means as access to economic resources, to education and to the decision-making processes in all fields and at all levels can the social and economic welfare of humankind progress. It is essential, therefore, that we create an environment conducive to women's full participation in the development process, as both its agents and its beneficiaries, if we are to move forward in our efforts to achieve sustained economic growth, sustainable development and social justice.

The observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is particularly significant to us in Indonesia, for it takes place while we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the proclamation of our independence. To us, this is not a mere coincidence in time but a convergence of ideals and values. Neither is it

a coincidence that the Charter of the United Nations and the Constitution of Indonesia embrace the same principles and objectives, such as independence, social justice, equality and abiding peace. For the United Nations and Indonesia emerged from the crucible of the Second World War and the struggle for independence yearning and hoping for the universal peace that can only be derived from a sharing of the fruits of freedom and justice by all humankind.

Since then, the United Nations and all of us, the peoples who are its constituents, have gone through another crucible, that of the cold war and the massive global changes that attended its wake. And, again, we have emerged with a yearning and a hope that the peace envisaged in the United Nations Charter 50 years ago will be attained in our time. The difference is that this time we have 50 years of experience to illuminate our endeavours and to sharpen our perspective of the future. On this occasion, as we rededicate ourselves to the vision of the United Nations Charter, let us resolve to use our collective experience in our continuing efforts to revitalize and strengthen the Organization that is the vehicle of our hope.

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Cambodia, His Excellency Mr. Ung Huot.

**Mr. Ung Huot** (Cambodia): First of all, I wish to extend to Mr. Freitas do Amaral and his glorious country, Portugal, my delegation's heartfelt congratulations on his election to the presidency of the fiftieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I am certain that his leadership talent and experiences will enable us to meet the serious challenges that we face in today's quickly changing world. I wish to assure him of our full cooperation.

On behalf of the Kingdom of Cambodia, I would like to join the heads of delegation who have preceded me in the pleasant task of expressing thanks and admiration to the President of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire, for the tremendous contribution he made over the course of a productive and historic year.

The Kingdom of Cambodia wishes also to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his strong and effective work, which has been so instrumental in the success of this Organization. We are all aware of the Secretary-General's great achievement in his handling of Cambodia's problem. My country is very proud of him. Cambodia now enjoys peace, freedom and democracy thanks to the representatives of all the Member States, who have contributed so much in this peace process with us. Cambodia wishes to pay special tribute to the courage of the United Nations peace-keepers who died for peace and freedom on Cambodian soil alongside thousands of other compatriots.

The Royal Government of Cambodia is working in close cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Cambodia, the Honourable Benny Widyono. His presence is of the utmost importance to Cambodia. He performs his duty with excellence and is highly commended by the Government and the people of Cambodia.

The Kingdom of Cambodia appreciated the work of the Honourable Justice Michael Kirby, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia. Through close cooperation and regular consultations with him, and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, steps are being taken to improve the human rights situation in the country. Cambodia, however, continues to support the presence and the work of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. It is making valuable contributions to and recommendations for the improvement of the overall situation in Cambodia.

It is with great honour and pride that I address this fiftieth session of the General Assembly, for the first time, as the representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia. The Royal Government today, under the leadership of both the First Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Ranariddh, and the Second Prime Minister, Samdech Hun Sen, is now more than two years old. It was the result of a democratic election organized and supervised by the United Nations. It is a product of the multilateral efforts of the United Nations with the close cooperation of the Cambodian people, under the wise guidance and leadership of His Majesty King Norodom Sihanouk Varman.

Through the determination of the Cambodian people, the Kingdom of Cambodia today has emerged from a long period of destruction and war, with many challenges and opportunities to build a better future. In the past two years, the Royal Government has made important progress and achieved some of the most important work in nation-building, peace-building and economic development.

After the United Nations-sponsored election in May 1993 the two main political parties combined their efforts

and formed a coalition Government, which has shown itself to be able to work closely in an efficient manner. These achievements were only possible with the support and assistance of the international community.

With peace-building, Cambodia has further consolidated sustainable peace, security and stability, which are the necessary conditions for economic development and nation-building. We have been dealing with the task of reforming the military, the police and the administration for some time now, in order to improve the public sectors so that they can serve the needs and interests of the Cambodian people and the private sector. At the same time, the Royal Government and the National Assembly are working very closely together to make Cambodia a State based on the rule of law. Cambodia is now concentrating more effort, time, energy and funds on nation-building and economic development. In this respect, Cambodia is a nation in the making.

On the economic front, Cambodia is working closely with international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank and the Caisse Française pour le Developpement to ensure that the process of rehabilitation and transition to a market economy is well under way. Despite some difficulties during the period immediately following the elections, progress in economic development thus far is very encouraging. According to the latest report from the IMF, dated 15 September 1995,

> "The improved financial discipline has led to an increasingly stable economic environment, as is evident in the stability of the exchange rate after the wide fluctuations of previous years."

*Mr Gurirab (Namibia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

For the period from 1995 to 1997 the Kingdom of Cambodia is targeting a 7 per cent growth rate. The inflation rate was brought down from 200 per cent for the period before the election to 31 per cent in 1993 and to 18 per cent in 1994. An inflation rate of below 10 per cent has been projected for 1995. These improvements are linked to the pursuit of structural reforms in the financial sector, civil service, military and public enterprises. It is important to note here that a privatization law was adopted in December 1994, and private investments approved and formalized by the Council for the Development of Cambodia from August 1994 to May 1995 are estimated at $2.5 billion, compared to $621 million of private investment approved during the 1991 to 1993 period.

The Royal Government is pleased to inform you, Sir, and the Assembly that the National Programme to Rehabilitate and Develop Cambodia has made great progress in articulating the Government's overall and sectoral policies and programmes.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) First Country Programme for Cambodia for 1994-1995 has helped establish three important priorities: first, modernizing and restructuring the country; secondly, poverty alleviation and sustainable management of the environment; and, thirdly, natural resources.

In this regard, Cambodia wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his appeal for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, especially for the five main objectives: first, the lifting of the debt burden; secondly, a greater flow of finance to the least developed countries (LDCs); thirdly, a more favourable trade environment for the LDCs; fourthly, encouragement for partnership in LDCs; and, fifthly, a proper infrastructure within LDCs.

The economic and financial situation in Cambodia is evolving positively, and the performance criteria subscribed to by the Government with international organizations have been achieved. While these are good signs for improving the economic situation in Cambodia, poverty is still a major problem, particularly in rural areas, where development is moving at a slower pace. Rural development has been hampered in some parts of the country by the continuing problem of landmines. With international and bilateral assistance, the Cambodian Mine Action Centre is working towards making Cambodia a landmine-free country. It will take time, effort and support from the international community to accomplish that task.

This year the Kingdom of Cambodia has officially acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia. It has become an observer member in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and is now a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Cambodia is actively engaged in improving and expanding ties with all countries throughout the world. Since 1993, with its open door policy and the policy of positive engagement, Cambodia has rejoined the community of nations and is working closely with others to promote world peace and international security. So far

the Kingdom of Cambodia has established diplomatic relations with 87 countries from all continents.

Cambodia has also taken steps towards full integration into ASEAN. As an observer member of ASEAN, Cambodia may participate in important ASEAN meetings. In December this year Cambodia will for the first time participate in the ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, Thailand. Cambodia welcomed Vietnam's full membership of ASEAN, Lao aspirations to become a full member by 1997 and Myanmar's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia, to become an observer, and looks to the day when all the countries of South-East Asia form an ASEAN-10. At the same time, Cambodia welcomes the recent positive trends in the continuing development and growth of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). While sustainable economic development and growth are crucial for us all, it is important that development works to further enhance peace and stability for the whole world. The long-term solution being widespread economic development, Cambodia wishes to assure the Assembly of its support for the newly created World Trade Organization.

I turn to the question of world peace and international security. Cambodia is very concerned about the situation in Afghanistan. We support a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Somalia. Continuing war in these countries will have serious repercussions on international security.

Cambodia warmly welcomed the major agreement concluded between Israel and the Palestinians on Sunday, 24 September 1995. We support and encourage the continuing efforts of the Israeli and Palestinian people to build peace, freedom and harmony between them.

Cambodia is very happy to see that Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy of Myanmar, was freed last July by the State Law and Order Restoration Council. We welcome this latest move by Myanmar.

We note with great concern the role of the United Nations peace-keepers. Ten years ago they numbered only 4,000, but now, as new conflicts pop up like mushrooms, their number has risen to over 70,000. A new situation has also emerged wherein the credibility of the peace-keepers is constantly being challenged. We must find a mechanism to strengthen the role of the peace-keepers and give them better support and protection against the evil forces that are out to weaken and destroy them. It is in this context that we applaud the new role assigned to the peace-keepers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We pray for the success of the peace talks, led by the distinguished American diplomat Richard Holbrooke, between Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serbs.

The subject of the United Nations Conference on Women, held in Beijing this year, was very timely. Since the formation of the Provisional Government in June 1993, Cambodia has been conscious of the rights of women. Cambodia now has in the Government a National Secretariat for Women's Affairs, which promotes greater recognition of the roles of women in society. The Royal Government sent a delegation of women, headed by Her Royal Highness Princess Marie Norodom Ranariddh, to Beijing.

With regard to nuclear testing, as a Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Cambodia strongly supports a ban on all nuclear testing around the world. As we nave just concluded the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, nuclear tests anywhere, whether atmospheric or underground, are of major concern for all of us in terms of the health, safety and well-being of humankind. The Kingdom of Cambodia notes with satisfaction that progress is being made on the comprehensive test-ban treaty, and we applaud the agreement that has been reached on the mandate with regard to the production of fissile materials for weapons. We are very happy to see the encouraging sign from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in augmenting application of the NPT's safeguards provisions.

As one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cambodia looks forward with great enthusiasm to participating in the ninth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, to be held this year in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

We applaud the professional skill and chairmanship of His Excellency President Soeharto of the Republic of Indonesia during the last three years, as leader of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Cambodia is very happy to welcome the next Chairman of our Movement, His Excellency President Ernesto Samper, President of the Republic of Colombia. My delegation wishes to assure him that he will receive the fullest cooperation from Cambodia. We are convinced

that he will, in a very spirited way, keep our Movement in the international agenda spotlight.

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of this important Organization, an Organization that we should all be proud of, Cambodia calls for the strengthening and enhancement of the role of the United Nations, and urges that we move towards global peace-building and harmony. Remember that our Organization was built on the very idea of preventing and ending all conflicts and sufferings, and remember also that this same idea was made possible in the case of Cambodia. Cambodia, I am very proud to say, is one of the success stories of our Organization.

**The Acting President:** I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra, His Excellency Mr. Manuel Mas Ribó.

**Mr. Mas Ribó** (Andorra) *(spoke in Catalan; interpretation from French text furnished by the delegation)*: It is only right to begin by thanking the outgoing President, Minister Amara Essy, who has done so much for our Organization during the past year, and by congratulating the incoming President, Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral. On behalf of the people and the Government of Andorra, I wish him every success and good fortune in his important task. I have no doubt that this distinguished personality from the Iberian peninsula, for whom I have great respect and fraternal esteem, will take the helm of this Assembly with a firm hand.

For the last 50 years Heads of State, Heads of Government, Ministers and Ambassadors have been coming before this General Assembly of the United Nations to set out, with hope and with passion, their desire for world peace and the development of our planet. Year after year dignitaries from all corners of the globe have met in New York to reiterate the ideals conceived in San Francisco five decades ago. It is thus an honour and a privilege for me to do the same today, as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Andorra, a very old and very small nation, a State that is the fruit of 700 years of peace and independence.

The celebration of anniversaries allows people to pause briefly to look back on their past, to reflect, to draw conclusions and to try to better prepare their future. Fifty years after the horrors of the Second World War, "We the peoples of the United Nations" now have the task of reaffirming the importance of our Organization by consolidating its founding principles and giving impetus to the reform of the United Nations so as to make it a modern, efficient instrument for the new international order that has arisen since the end of the cold war.

The founding principles of the United Nations could be summed up as follows: equality of States, tolerance, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the promotion of development.

The principle of the equality of States is dear to all small States. The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations refers to all nations, large and small. In the General Assembly each State has one vote.

A sovereign State is not only a group — whatever its size — of people; it is a history, a language, the will of a people, a sense of independence — in a word, a community of human beings. Some States, like ours, Andorra, have only 60,000 inhabitants. Others have more than a billion. But all have the right to speak and vote at the United Nations. And, just as peace comes into being when the powerful respect the small, the rule of law becomes reality in international affairs when all are treated as equals and when parties can solve their differences at the negotiating table, not on the field of devastation that results from the use of force.

Last year, the Head of Government of Andorra stressed from this very rostrum that by their very nature, small States intrinsically and essentially maintain the values of respect for diversity and of peaceful coexistence. To create a world balanced by the rule of law in a world of instincts, exchanges must be based on the principle of equality between States.

Nevertheless, the principle of equality should not be reduced to the formula "one State, one vote". The principle of equality springs from the desire to understand the other, to allow diversity and to exchange different visions of humankind and society. The principle of equality derives from the concept of tolerance. In this International Year of Tolerance, we must be particularly aware of the central position of this idea. The United Nations cannot exist without tolerance. It would surely be absurd to meet in this Assembly if all that were to come out of it was the prevention and outlawing of the opinions of others. Though it is sometimes considered less heroic than force, diplomacy is the supreme instrument we have in this forum, an instrument for respect and understanding.

We in Andorra have resorted to diplomacy from historical necessity from very early times; these 700

years of peace of which we are so proud are probably the result. We have also had to be tolerant and to respect others because, during the numerous conflicts that have shaken the European continent over the centuries, we have sheltered on our territory those in search of asylum, from whichever side they came. We have learned, I repeat, of necessity, being weak and humble like all small States, how to differ without imposing ourselves.

Let us give tolerance the importance it deserves as a founding principle of the United Nations. But tolerance does not mean *laissez faire*. Just as John Stuart Mill set the limits of individual freedom at the point at which that freedom infringed on the liberty of others, tolerance is limited only by intolerance. The United Nations has the power to say "no" to those States and peoples who do not respect the religious, political, moral and artistic convictions of others; "no" to those States and peoples who do not respect minorities, be they national or of any other kind, and their languages, which are an essential element of cultural transmission; "no", above all, when repression is accompanied by the use of force and by cruelty, torture and other unspeakable acts. That is why, since joining the United Nations, my country has attached such importance to the Third Committee of the General Assembly and to questions of human rights. Last year, Andorra took an active part in the debate on capital punishment, applying the constitutional ideas approved by its people, which loves life and believes in it.

The United Nations was not built in a vacuum of values -- quite the contrary. When, in June 1945, the right words were being sought in San Francisco for the United Nations Charter, those that were found were based on a very clear vision of the dignity of the human being with a universal vocation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations on 10 December 1948, made clear once and for all what was, is and will be acceptable and desirable, and what is not, in order that the inalienable dignity of every human being should be respected and the limits of tolerance demarcated by defining what we consider to be intolerable.

For instance, we find intolerable the ethnic and religious intolerance that leads to disasters like those which the horror-struck international community has been obliged to witness in the territories that were once part of Yugoslavia. To face up to these challenges, the United Nations has made a considerable effort in recent years to carry out large-scale operations to keep the peace. The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, informed us on 3 January this year in his supplement to "An Agenda for Peace" of the considerable increase in the deployment of military personnel since 1988. On 31 January of that year, 9,570 "blue helmets" were engaged in peace-keeping operations; as at 16 December last year, there were 73,393.

The near non-use of the veto in the Security Council since the end of the cold war has encouraged this growth in deployment. Very often, unfortunately, we hear so much talk of the failures of United Nations operations that we forget to mention the successes. When we now celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization, we should proclaim it aloud: the role of the United Nations has been essential, and the results are highly positive. Let us not ask the United Nations to do what the Organization cannot do, and has no vocation to do, making it the target of criticisms better levelled at the paralysis of Member States. The United Nations is and will be what the Member States wish it to be, neither more nor less, and without miracles.

The complexity of the conflicts now afflicting the world, as the Secretary-General has on several occasions pointed out, lies in the fact that most of them are conflicts within the borders of States, or former States. This makes them more complicated than the conflicts we were accustomed to during the years of the cold war, mainly because in many cases the target for destruction is the civilian population, and secondly because the task of the humanitarian organizations and the soldiers sent to keep the peace is not respected by the parties to the conflict, which consider them as abetting the enemy.

The action for peace taken by the United Nations, an Organization founded on the ruins of a ferocious war, must be constant. It is our imperative duty to eliminate war and to cut off conflicts at the root. We all know the recommendations listed by the Secretary-General in his "An Agenda for Peace", so I shall not repeat them. But I will underline the importance in the opinion of my Government of preventive diplomacy. Precisely because Andorra came into being as a result of a peace agreement signed in 1278, which made our territory completely neutral and which called for the destruction of all castles and warlike fortifications, we can well understand the possibility of stopping conflicts in time by means of peace agreements that neutralize the power to harm of the contenders by removing both parties' access to armaments.

But the United Nations and we, its Members, must have the courage to act when the first signs of a conflict

lead us to suspect its existence. The world today needs an international authority to facilitate dialogue, to suggest compromises acceptable to the parties to the conflict — above all, when the conflict is in its initial stages — and to confirm the agreements reached by negotiation. The United Nations has demonstrated that it is such an institution, and it would be unjust not to recognize this great merit during this anniversary. Let us imagine a world without the United Nations, where force predominated over law, where there were no standard universal values for which to strive, where the human community, which is capable of the highest and most noble acts, fell into a vortex of egoism, war and destruction. The United Nations is not optional in this world of interdependent States, but indispensable.

Please allow me at this stage to evaluate the relevance of Andorra's modern development in this regard. As I have said, Andorra is a land of peace, welcome and friendship. During the more than 700 years of its existence with its own national identity, particularly in this century, when wars have shaken our neighbour States and Europe, Andorra has been a place of refuge, of asylum and of peaceful coexistence. It is precisely now, when 50 years have passed since the founding of the United Nations as a result of the events of that tragic phase in human history, and when we must still regret that irrationality is sowing death and cruelty in many places throughout the world, that we would like to recall, humbly, but with a firmness informed by the realities of our history, the deep and sincere conviction that Andorra can bring to the world. There can be no difficulty in peaceful coexistence if there is good will and understanding. There can be no infringement of tolerance if there is respect for people and ideas. In a word, magnanimity and indulgence will always be more effective than ignominy and opprobrium.

From Andorra we proclaim peace; we call for it and, if necessary, we demand it as a universal possession that no one has the right to change or to violate. When there is serious aggression against nature and the environment, when materialism and speculation seek to obliterate humanism and sensitivity, when the hypocrisy of interests overcomes the reality of ideals, a generous-spirited common effort must be made to find the path of peace and coexistence.

The Andorran Constitution enshrines respect for and the promotion of freedom, equality, justice and tolerance, and the defence of human rights and individual dignity. With that background, we forcefully insist before the General Assembly that the primary purpose of mankind is to achieve peace, without reservation and without ulterior motive. None of us here can be satisfied with the results until one day we can announce the great news that peace reigns on Earth. The near-universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the spirit of which Andorra has always respected, is a positive example of that common task. It thus gives me pleasure today to announce that the Government of Andorra has submitted the Treaty to its Parliament for ratification.

Peace must be promoted. By every possible means, especially through education, we must spread the word everywhere that only tolerance, common sense, understanding, good will, solidarity, respect for cultural diversity with its intellectual and spiritual stimulation, variety and the struggle for social progress and brotherhood can lead to peace and can provide pride and dignity to all human beings while eliminating intransigence and racial, religious, social and political hatred, which are at the root of all conflicts between peoples and civilizations.

There must be an end to the horrors and atrocities of the wars that continue to take place in our civilized world amid alarming indifference. These threats affect us all; we must find the means to prevent violence against society and against individuals. It is not enough to cry out in compassion or frustration, or to make the excuse that we are the victims of modern times, as Anthony Burgess put it in his novel *A Clockwork Orange*. There must be determination if we are to be able to say that we all have a future. There must be serious, unhesitating commitment on the part of those bearing the heaviest responsibility, particularly with respect to the economic consequences, which are in fact predominant in causing certain scandalous situations and in keeping them alive. We must act with morality if we are to be able to face repeated aggression against human rights. It would be wonderful if we could all make an unstinting effort to emerge from the shadows and if, with one voice, we could set up the machinery that would make peace triumph forever, and could understand — in the words of François Mitterrand, former President of the French Republic and therefore former Co-Prince of Andorra — that "awareness of injustice is not enough to combat injustice".

As we strive towards peace let us always remember that we can never reach the development goals set by Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali in his "An Agenda for Development" without reducing the warlike and military activities of the poorest countries. Let us face the facts: development makes for peace, but without peace, without eliminating unnecessary spending on military equipment,

without agreement among Governments that rightly demand a better future for their citizens, there will be no development.

But this must not mean a relaxation of the development efforts that Member States and the Organization itself have always promoted. Day after day in the field, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) carry out work that is far too important not to enjoy our sincere support. I take this opportunity to announce that during my stay in New York I signed, on behalf of the Government of Andorra, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which reflects my country's recognition of the cause promoted by that great text. Men and women like the late James Grant — who at UNICEF carried out such tasks and contributed to the well-being of so many children throughout the world — demonstrate the productive vitality of the United Nations.

We in Andorra are much concerned with questions of development. Despite our modest means and small territory, we feel solidarity with victims of malnutrition, hunger, sickness and the lack of educational opportunities. Our foreign policy at the United Nations has been oriented in that direction. Last March, the Andorran Head of Government brought to Copenhagen a message of solidarity, and declared that poverty was not inevitable. Andorra is a small State; we are therefore convinced that, apart from the importance of large programmes and their inevitable macro-amplitudes, social development is a more accessible goal when it is approached on a small scale, at the level of the community or indeed of the family.

Hence, the Declaration of the World Summit for Social Development includes a commitment proposed by Andorra, which we shall invoke in our work in the Assembly's Main Committees. This commitment urges us to

> "Acknowledge and encourage the contribution of people of all age groups as equally and vitally important for the building of a harmonious society, and foster dialogue between generations in all parts of society". (*A/CONF.166/9, para. 29, commitment 4 (h)*)

Human beings, happily, are living longer, and their numbers are growing. We must find new ways to guarantee the balance of the social contract between generations, and make social integration — one of the pillars of development — work. To that end, we need to devote special attention to the problems of unemployment and the social integration of young people, particularly this year as we mark the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year. I have instructed our Permanent Representative to the United Nations to devote time and resources to initiating a dialogue with his counterparts on the question of youth.

We have recently seen how three great conferences — those of Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing — focused the attention of the international community. Cairo addressed problems of population, Copenhagen those of poverty and social development, and Beijing the question of women. It is vital that the conclusions of these high-level meetings not become a dead letter; all Member States must assess their results and consider their concrete applications, both at home and throughout the world. But Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing must not overshadow other similar conferences. I am thinking of Rio de Janeiro and its impact on environmental policy. A country of the Pyrenees, like Andorra, cannot shirk its environmental responsibilities; that is why the office of Andorra's Secretary-General for the environment has drawn up valuable initiatives to protect our ecosystem, our flora and fauna, our waters and the air we breathe.

In this statement I have tried to recall the founding principles that inspire the United Nations, and the great themes on which the General Assembly will reflect over the coming decades. Clearly, not everything has been perfect during the past 50 years; there have been situations where we Member States have not been effective enough. Every day, we hear about hunger, disease and lack of access to education, which affect the poor more often than the rich. But now, on this anniversary, let us take comfort from the work that has been achieved. As I said before, let us consider what the world would be without the United Nations.

None the less, on the eve of the third millennium, when interdependence among the Earth's peoples is stronger than ever, we need the United Nations to be increasingly nimble and flexible, able to process information quickly and to react rapidly to any crisis. Many reforms are needed: reform of the Security Council, now under debate, and that of the Economic and Social Council, which may take place in the future, will not be the last. We also need more effective methods for allocating resources and for evaluating the needs of each department to avoid duplication of labour. The Secretary-

General has mentioned this on several occasions, and I have no doubt that, given good will, we shall succeed.

The Principality of Andorra — in the words of our Head of Government — is a very old nation and a very young State. We are a newcomer to the United Nations — the 184th Member. Nevertheless, it is to the United Nations that we have set up our first diplomatic mission. Our first Permanent Representative, who during the next two years will be in charge of opening our Mission and starting its activities, presented his credentials to the Secretary-General just over a week ago. With the humility of a newcomer, but with the joy and energy of the convinced, we are making progress in our task of participating in the work of the Organization.

I should like, on behalf of the people and Government of Andorra, to affirm our support for the United Nations. We wish it long life and much success in its struggle for tolerance, peace and development, for the benefit of the world and of generations to come. And we express our hope that humankind will guard those values that will allow us all to face the challenges of the future — love, brotherhood and friendship.

Let me end this statement by quoting Robert Kennedy:

(*spoke in English*)

> "It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and, crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

**The Acting President:** The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa, on whom I call.

**Mr. Al-Khalifa** (Bahrain) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At the outset I have pleasure in extending to Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral and to his friendly country, Portugal, my sincere congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly for this session, which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, when the Organization is celebrating its golden jubilee. In wishing Mr. Freitas do Amaral success in conducting the proceedings of this session, I assure him of my delegation's readiness to cooperate fully with him towards achieving the desired objectives.

I should like also to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to Mr. Freitas do Amaral's predecessor, Mr. Amara Essy, for his dedicated and sincere efforts in guiding the proceedings of the last session.

It is also a pleasure to express my deep appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his tireless efforts to enhance the international Organization's standing and role and to enable it to carry out its great responsibilities and tasks.

The United Nations was established 50 years ago with the purpose of becoming the effective means of saving humanity from the scourge of war which had plagued the century. The Organization was also designed to serve as a mechanism aimed at developing a new international order based on justice and equality for all and the promotion of human and cultural interaction amongst the world's various peoples in the framework of a secure international community.

States and peoples, in their desire for security, stability and cooperation, supported the principles enshrined in the Charter, including those which call for ensuring the sovereign equality of and mutual respect between States, refraining from the threat or use of force, entrenching the principles of settling disputes by peaceful means, respecting every State's territorial integrity, and refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of others.

Guided by these principles, the United Nations has achieved numerous accomplishments at the political, economic and social levels. Many nations and peoples, with the support of the United Nations, have been able to achieve political independence, attain their legitimate rights and implement development programmes.

The 50 year experience of the United Nations embodies profound indications of the future of a changing world in which the enormous interacting developments have not yet reached the limit. The most prominent among those signs is, perhaps, the end of the era of confrontation between East and West at a time when the human race is on the threshold of a new century. The profound significance of these developments is that the prevailing political climate has given rise to a situation that favours the correcting of certain trends in

international relations and their development in a manner that takes into account the new circumstances and changes in several regions of the world.

In the context of these historical premises, world Powers have been concerned that changes might lead them to proceed in disparate directions which, it was feared, would make it difficult for the international community to check the unrestrained pace of the changes so engendered and control their effects on world peace and security. Thus it becomes essential to develop a balancing strategy for joint international action, especially now that interdependence and multilateralism must form the basis of cooperation in international relations.

This political reality was given expression on 31 January 1992, when the Security Council — for the first time — held a meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government. The Council then requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report containing analyses and recommendations concerning ways of enhancing and strengthening the capabilities of the United Nations in the areas of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. Recently, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Secretary-General has submitted the important "Supplement to 'An Agenda for Peace'", in which he set out his views and thoughts as a contribution to the continuous drive to enhance the Organization's capability to face up to threats to international peace and security.

The significance of this new tendency was underscored during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and its Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 as well as in many other important international conventions relating to development and the environment. It was further confirmed during the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo last year. Both the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen, and the Fourth World Conference on Women, held recently in Beijing, confirmed the principle of interdependence and recognized its importance.

These world conferences and meetings have made the United Nations a global forum for the international politics of multilateralism. Efforts are now being directed towards addressing the problems of the future, such as environmental pollution and population explosion, in addition to economic and social crises and other dilemmas of a universal character.

This increasing tendency to act in accordance with the principles of interdependence and multilateralism is undoubtedly a positive one that is in consonance with the purposes of the Charter. However, certain aspects of the current international situation raise a number of fundamental questions concerning the role of the United Nations and its influence on the current developments on the international scene which serve as pointers to the shape of future relations between States.

Such questioning includes, for example: How will the Organization steer a course amid the new features of the modern political topography which is changing due to incessant strategic changes of international policies? How will the major Powers identify the role of the United Nations in the area of interdependence and international multilateralism? And how will they deal with crises in areas of high tension around the world?

It is obvious that such questioning has to do, in essence, with two fundamental issues. The first is the future of collective security, as envisioned in the Charter, for the remaining part of this century and during the next century. The second is the mechanism for international economic and social cooperation to which the major industrial States will agree.

A search into the legacy of the United Nations during half a century leads us to say that these two issues will constitute the major characteristics of international relations in the twenty-first century. The problem of the *realpolitik* policies pursued by the Powers that influence the formulation of international relations is that they do not seem to be in harmony with the principle of collective security. The problem of international economic and social cooperation lies in the fact that the concepts of economic and social development held by the wealthy industrialized countries are at variance with those of the developing countries *vis-à-vis* the economic and social aspects of development issues. In our view, this difference of outlook creates obstacles that not only impede the implementation and development of international cooperation but also affect the manner in which economic and social problems are dealt with.

The two issues of collective security and international economic and social cooperation should be accorded an increasing importance since they embody the solid foundation of stability and progress in a world that is in a state of flux. The need to attach such importance to those two issues arises from the fact that, for over 50 years, the international community has not been able to

reach consensus on how to put into practice the principle of collective security in line with the vision of the Charter. In so far as international economic and social cooperation is concerned, the North-South dialogue has not led to any positive result in over three decades.

Given this fact, the world has to evolve new perceptions on how to address the issues of collective security and international economic and social cooperation in the context of a practical perspective that takes into account the new changes that have taken place in the world.

In our view, it is possible, once the international community musters the necessary political will, to put into practice important aspects of the principle of collective security along the following lines:

The creation of a mechanism that meets on a regular basis within the framework of the Security Council to monitor and detect threats to world peace and security.

The development and better use of the mechanisms of preventive diplomacy in preventing, containing or pre-empting conflicts before they develop into serious hostilities.

The development, in all seriousness, of the ideas and concepts embodied in Chapter VII of the Charter, in the light of the international community's experience, to become the basis of dealing with aggression as it arises.

The utilization of the capabilities of regional organizations in the context of United Nations cooperation with such organizations in the maintenance of world peace and security.

As regards international economic and social cooperation, this too requires the existence of the political will, especially on the part of the wealthy industrialized countries, to create an equitable global economic environment that may contribute to the achievement of stability and prosperity for all States and peoples.

We believe that the gap which exists, in the areas of economic growth and social advancement, between the wealthy industrialized countries, with their enormous economic resources, and the developing countries, is among the most chronic and significant problems that face the international community.

Regrettably, the commitments to implement the development policies and strategies agreed upon in the United Nations with a view to narrowing that gap have not been honoured. It goes without saying that the United Nations will not be able to discharge its mandate in an environment fraught with disparities, because the poverty, unemployment and lack of productive employment that are rampant throughout the world are negative factors in the area of development. Proceeding from its awareness of this reality, the United Nations has convened the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen to address the urgent and serious issues of social development that face mankind. We believe that the implementation of the policies set out in the Summit's Declaration and Programme of Action should take place within the context of the religious principles, national legislation, customs and traditions of every State.

It is essential at this stage to reopen the dialogue within the United Nations system between developed and developing countries concerning all development matters, on the basis of the commitments set out in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. To that end, a new and practical development plan has to be adopted with a view to ensuring compliance with the decisions of the various United Nations development conferences, so that the desired objectives of those decisions may be achieved.

We are convinced that international cooperation could be enhanced and strengthened through the adoption of policies leading to the activation of the United Nations role in the area of economic and social cooperation by means of addressing such world problems as development and environment. Also, world trade mechanisms should be developed in accordance with the common interests of States and in an equitable manner that takes into account the requirements of development and the economic problems of the developing countries, accords due attention to the socio-political aspects of the economic problems that beset those countries and aims at consolidating the foundations of their economic security.

Notwithstanding its accomplishments, on the one hand, and, on the other, the obstacles and failures it has encountered for reasons beyond its control, the United Nations now finds itself facing a new challenge. This new challenge forces it to deal with crises and problems caused by ethnic, national and even religious and cultural conflicts and clashes between parties that belonged to

States and territories which had originally been unified in accordance with agreements reached in the wake of this century's wars.

In view of the tense regional and international atmosphere caused by the eruption of those heretofore dormant volcanoes and the ensuing changes brought about by such eruption, it has become essential to enhance the role of the United Nations and provide it with the necessary means of dealing effectively with such crises and resolving them before they develop into devastating wars between the sons of this or that country such as those we now witness in Afghanistan, Somalia, the Balkans and other parts of the world where peoples are suffering destruction and destitution.

In addition to the new issues that the United Nations now faces in the wake of the cold war, there is a host of regional and international questions that continue to be cause for concern and require the attention of our Organization. Top of the list is the situation in the Gulf region which, in the recent past, witnessed two destructive wars whose consequences continue to affect adversely the region's political and economic conditions and to jeopardize its security and stability. Proceeding from our eagerness to preserve security and stability in this vital region of the world, we call upon all parties to pay heed to its importance as an area where international interests criss-cross and as an area of strategic importance to world trade.

In the light of these facts, we stress the need for Iraq to comply with Security Council resolutions concerning the State of Kuwait and the release of Kuwaiti and other prisoners of war and detainees. While we call upon Iraq to respond fully to the behests of international legality, we must voice our concern over the territorial integrity, sovereignty and unity of Iraq which must be preserved and express sympathy with the brotherly Iraqi people who endure difficult economic and social conditions that should end once their causes cease to exist.

The persistence of the dispute between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran over the question of sovereignty over the islands of Abu Mousa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb is regrettable in view of its adverse effects on the Gulf region's security and stability.

Consequently, Bahrain calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the United Arab Emirates call to seek a solution to the question of the islands through serious bilateral talks, or by any of the other peaceful means that are available for the settlement of disputes between States by mutual consent.

The Middle East has embarked on a new historical phase wherein optimism holds sway with the adoption of the principle of negotiation and respect for law as a means to settle disputes between States instead of war, violence and occupation of territories by force. The peace process in the Middle East has taken significant steps since the historic Washington meeting 13 September 1993, which resulted in the signing of the Agreement on Principles between the Palestinians and Israel. It was followed by the signing of the Peace Treaty between Jordan and Israel on 26 October 1994 and the signing of the second phase of the Agreement of Principles on the expansion of Palestinian self-rule between the Palestinians and Israel in Washington on 28 September 1995. The sparkle of optimism that has glittered on the horizon should not be allowed to die out as a result of the Israeli settlement policies that aim at changing the demography of the occupied Arab territories, particularly Al-Quds, in order to create a new reality.

Bahrain welcomes these steps and reaffirms its support for the Middle East peace process. It also supports the endeavours and efforts that aim at reaching a just, comprehensive and durable solution based on the principle of land for peace as well as Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Proceeding from this, Bahrain reaffirms its support for the position taken by the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the restoration of its full sovereignty over its territories in the Syrian Golan that has been occupied since 1967. It is also important that the peace process should be reactivated on the Lebanese track and that Israel should be compelled to comply with Security Council resolution 425 (1978). For if peace is to prevail, it should include all parties without exception.

We appeal to all the parties involved in the dispute in Somalia to allow the creation of a secure climate that is conducive to the continuation of political efforts and humanitarian activities. Such continuation depends on the cooperation of those parties and on their adherence to the principle of dialogue and understanding in order to achieve a political settlement that would ensure the restoration of peace, security and stability to this sister nation.

The State of Bahrain has, from the beginning, followed with utmost attention and deepest concern the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with all the

human tragedies and injustices resulting from the policies of aggression and criminal acts, including killings, deportations and ethnic cleansing, committed by the Serb aggressors against the people of Bosnia. The crisis has taken several turns and twists and has been accompanied by political moves by regional and international parties that have almost deprived the international community of credibility.

Bahrain has supported all United Nations resolutions relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It has endorsed all the efforts and initiatives undertaken by the United Nations, as well as other organizations and all those who desire peace and uphold justice.

As the Serbs have gone too far in their aggression and in defying the will of the international community in pursuit of their expansionist and aggressive schemes that have been exposed to all and rejected by all, we see a ray of light on the horizon which gives cause for hope that, at long last, a solution for this human tragedy may be at hand and might finally redeem the international community's silence over the plight of the Bosnian people.

Bahrain supports the positive developments that are taking place now in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It calls upon the international community and the Security Council to maintain pressure on the Serb aggressors towards compliance with United Nations resolutions and accepting a just and equitable solution for all parties. In particular, the solution should be just and equitable for the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose people have suffered material losses and have been subjected to inhuman suffering as a result of the occupation of parts of their territories.

While we voice deep concern over the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, we should like to call upon the parties involved in the conflict to resort to reason and logic and, thereby, reach a cease-fire and work for peace, stability and national reconciliation.

The United Nations has deployed continuous efforts over the past few years towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem. In this connection, we should like to reiterate our support for the efforts of the Secretary-General that aim at reaching a just resolution of the problem in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Bahrain, having supported the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the objectives thereof,is of the opinion that the Treaty, being an instrument of international peace and security, should apply universally with no exceptions or special considerations. We should like, meanwhile, to stress the need for upholding the Treaty, adherence to its provisions and pursuit of its objectives. Bahrain views Security Council resolution 984 (1995), despite the limited nature of the guarantees it embodies, as a first positive step towards security guarantees that are applicable to all, for States which do not possess nuclear weapons.

Bahrain supported the initiative of making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction on the basis of its belief in the importance of peace, security and confidence building amongst all States of the region. It has also endorsed the resolution adopted by the conference of the parties to the NPT and the arms limitations Treaty, despite its shortcomings. We are confident that a Middle East zone free of nuclear and weapons of mass destruction would enhance the peace process and lead to a situation wherein enormous financial resources would be saved and channelled towards the economic prosperity and social development of the peoples of the region.

Regional cooperation has become one of the necessities of our modern world in view of the intertwined interests of the peoples of the world. It is thus a complementary part of, rather than a substitute for international cooperation. It serves today as an effective means for the promotion of economic prosperity and mutual understanding with a view to establishing strong relations based on mutual trust, good-neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of others.

The Arab Gulf States have long recognized the importance of regional cooperation amongst them in enabling them to face the imminent risks that beset the region. More than 15 years ago, they established the Gulf Cooperation Council with a view to reinvigorating Gulf joint action and strengthening the historical and brotherly ties between the Gulf States on the basis of the unity of objectives and a common destiny. The Council's march has witnessed positive developments in the fields of coordination and cooperation amongst its member States. The resolutions of the fifteenth summit which Bahrain had the honour of hosting and presiding over have strengthened this march. The summit had historic significance in that it addressed crucial Gulf issues by adopting resolutions that reaffirmed the determination to widen the scope of cooperation, to surmount obstacles and to settle all outstanding matters within the Council

and the unified Gulf family. Brotherly and friendly States have welcomed these steps and expressed the hope that the same spirit would apply to all issues so that all the States and peoples of the region may reap the benefits of security, stability and prosperity.

The Governments of the States members of the Council have undertaken to continue to promote all aspects of cooperation between their States and with other economic groups, to look forward positively to the prospects of future work and to develop strategic visions that take into consideration the interests and priorities of the other members of the Council and those of other States in the interests of peace, security and stability in the region and in the world at large.

The strengthening of the United Nations role and increasing its capabilities and effectiveness require the developing of its bodies, including the Security Council, the organ concerned with international peace and security. The need to develop the work of the Council has become an important issue that has the unanimous support of Member States in view of the current international changes. We believe that such development should reflect the equitable geographic representation of all regional groups in order to increase the effectiveness and level of efficiency of the Organization and to achieve balance in the Council, so that its membership may be representative of the world's different cultures. As member of this international Organization, Bahrain looks forward to participating in the work of the Council during the period of its membership scheduled for 1998-1999.

We all aspire after a world of security, cooperation and peace. Our international Organization, equipped as it is with its membership's intellectual and cultural values and with the high principles and noble objectives enshrined in its Charter, is quite capable of satisfying this aspiration. However, in order for the United Nations to do so, we, its Members, must give the Organization our full support on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary so that it may achieve in our behalf what we all desire, namely, justice and peace.

**The Acting President:** I now call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, His Excellency the Honourable Lakshman Kadirgamar.

**Mr. Kadirgamar** (Sri Lanka): Let me at the outset extend to Mr. Freitas do Amaral of Portugal the sincere good wishes of the Government and people of Sri Lanka on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at this its historic fiftieth session. We are privileged to have him guide its deliberations. My delegation offers him the same full cooperation that we extended to all his predecessors in that high office.

Our gratitude is due Mr. Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire, who presided over the forty-ninth session with great skill and wisdom.

When I addressed the Assembly last year, I reported that the people of Sri Lanka had secured an electoral victory for

> "moderation, tolerance and unity" (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Plenary Meetings, 5th meeting, p. 23*)

in a society that had passed through harrowing times. I detailed the initiatives taken by the Government of President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, supported by a number of political parties, including those of the two principal minority communities, to resolve outstanding ethnic and other disputes through a bold process of political negotiation. That process was launched, but later encountered set-backs, primarily because one of the groups with which the Government had commenced talks abruptly returned to violence and terrorism, rejecting the peaceful option to which the rest of the country is committed. The Government has been constrained to take unavoidable reactive military measures to safeguard the lives, the security and the welfare of those who are threatened by the terrorist group. So long as they aim at our leaders the threat of assassination, we cannot believe that their professions of peace are sincere.

We continue to fulfil our obligations to all our citizens, including those trapped in the north of the country. Supplies of food and other essential requirements are being made available by the Government and delivered through the International Committee of the Red Cross to our citizens in affected areas. This is an exceptional exercise which the late James Grant of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) described as uniquely humanitarian in a conflict situation.

We are deeply troubled and concerned about the situation in which the children of the north and east of our country are placed. That mankind owes to the child the best it has to give is universally accepted. Yet we are appalled that in their desperation the militants, spurning

the entreaties of distraught parents, have descended to conscripting children as young in age as 10 years to wage war and have even assigned them to suicide missions. A recent military encounter in north-eastern Sri Lanka revealed grim evidence confirming our worst fears. Most of the lives sacrificed by the leadership of the militants were teenagers barely able to carry arms, let alone understand the twisted mono-ethnic separatist ideology they have been indoctrinated to defend. In truth, it is the militants who must bear the ultimate responsibility for civilian casualties in this conflict. One of the challenges of peace that Sri Lanka will soon have to face is the need to overcome the terrible legacy of the subverted and distorted young minds, of the broken, bereft families and interrupted lives that the conflict will leave behind.

All this has only increased my Government's determination to fulfil an imperative mandate from the people, to rebuild a free society in our Republic which is based on tolerance and understanding and in which all communities throughout the nation could live in harmony and dignity in accordance with the principles of democratic governance. The Government has accordingly presented comprehensive proposals, daring in their scope and reach, for the devolution of power to regional units. True to our long-established democratic tradition, a free-ranging national debate among Sri Lankans is proceeding on these proposals. The eventual implementation of agreed proposals will require compliance with the procedures appropriate for the amendment of our Constitution, including a two-thirds majority in Parliament and a national referendum.

To help further enhance conditions of confidence for the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, my Government has presented legislation in Parliament to establish a Human Rights Commission in Sri Lanka. The Commission will consist of members chosen from among persons with knowledge and experience in the field of human rights. They will be appointed on the recommendation of a Constitutional Council — an independent and widely representative body reflecting all shades of political opinion. The proposed Commission will have monitoring functions in respect of executive and administrative practices as well as investigative functions to inquire into any infringement of fundamental rights. It will also have advisory and other functions, *inter alia*, to ensure that laws and administrative practices accord with international human-rights norms and standards and to facilitate inexpensive access to remedial relief. Sri Lanka has consistently supported United Nations initiatives for national institution-building in the field of human rights.

It has been a source of major encouragement to us that the international community has supported the efforts of the Government of Sri Lanka in the pursuit of peace. While the eventual solution of our problems lies essentially in our own hands and through mechanisms of our own devising, we sincerely appreciate the interest and support of the international community. It is in this context that I have volunteered today to brief the Assembly on the situation in Sri Lanka.

The significance of this session of the United Nations General Assembly extends well beyond the fact that it commemorates 50 years in the life of the Organization. International life is in constant flux. No era is wholly static. Yet the last decade or so has seen radical changes affecting virtually every aspect of life on this planet. Not all of such changes have been welcome. Not all of the changes have reached their logical, or indeed illogical, conclusion.

The acclaimed transformation in South Africa has been a blessed exception. Institutionalized racism in its grosser forms has at last been vanquished. The South African experience has demonstrated the power of tolerance, understanding and inspired leadership to wear down the brutal, evil legacies of the past. It has also shown that there is a capacity for change in human attitudes once considered unthinkable. Racism, however, has continued in subtler forms elsewhere in the world. The international community must continue to be vigilant. That ugly phenomenon must never be tolerated, wherever it occurs and whatever its manifestations.

Sri Lanka feels deeply that the African continent needs the wholehearted and vigorous support of the international community to overcome the obstacles to development and growth in this vital region of the world. The strengthening and utilization of the capacities and resources of Africa, identified by the African countries themselves and the Economic Commission for Africa, and concerted action to implement the Programme of Action for the Least-Developed Countries are urgently called for.

The Middle East is the cradle of three of the world's great religions. Yet historical prejudices have weighed down the quest for peace. Resort to violence and terrorism, the expropriation of land and the development of illegal settlements have conspired to impede the momentum for peace. Sri Lanka supports the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East, the realization of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people

and the establishment of conditions of peace and stability for all States in the region which would enable them to develop within secure boundaries. Commitments made on interim agreements towards this objective, as Chairman Arafat of Palestine stated last Thursday, must be precise, honest and mutual.

In Bosnia, Sri Lanka welcomes the fact that the parties concerned have found it possible to commence peace negotiations although the guns have yet to be finally silenced. We feel deeply for, and share the sorrow of, those who mourn for lives lost, lives disrupted in the affected communities. We hope that a viable settlement acceptable to all will soon be concluded. I had occasion recently, speaking in the Parliament of Sri Lanka, to condemn unreservedly the inhumane and cruel treatment that has been inflicted upon the Muslims in Bosnia. These and other atrocities committed in Bosnia have been fully documented by the United Nations rapporteurs and humanitarian agencies and need to be condemned by the international community.

The role of the United Nations in that conflict has received special focus as the Organization, in this its fiftieth year, undergoes a period of introspection. The situation in Bosnia has been an unusually complex one in which the United Nations has had to deal with developments without precedent in the Organization's peace-keeping history. In terms of Article 17 of the United Nations Charter, peace-keeping is the collective financial responsibility of all States. A healthy, albeit controversial, debate has proceeded in the United Nations on peace-keeping and other related issues. The debate has made abundantly clear that United Nations intervention or involvement in any situation can expect to be successful only if certain basic considerations are heeded. First, any intervention must enjoy the general support and confidence of the international community and not be promoted merely to satisfy the political exigencies and partisan objectives of members of the Security Council or other powerful States. Secondly, in any intervention the consent of the countries in conflict must be clearly obtained. Finally, such politico-military operations must neither dominate United Nations activity nor be its principal financial liability. They must certainly not be carried out to the detriment of the pressing development priorities of the United Nations.

In "An Agenda for Peace" the Secretary-General has sought to evaluate manifold aspects of contemporary peace and security, not merely the question of peace-keeping operations. This evaluation has had a continuous focus in the General Assembly, in the Security Council, in other forums such as the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries as well as in national debate since the Secretary-General's initial report was presented in 1992. The cardinal aspect of "An Agenda for Peace" is the conviction that it is clearly better to prevent conflicts through heeding early warnings and encouraging quiet diplomacy rather than through launching major politico-military ventures to settle conflicts after they have erupted.

While economic factors have not always been the cause of conflict, we very much agree with the Secretary-General that the foundations for peace lie primarily in the realm of economic and social development.

The 1990s have often been described as a period of economic globalization, considering the increasing interdependence among States, greater international integration and flow of goods, services, capital and markets, as well as a more widespread and rapid dissemination of information and ideas through technological advancements in communications. Globalization is sometimes over- simplified as a phenomenon favourable to the emancipation of international economic activity. It is true that most economies which had been constricted or centrally controlled have now been liberalized and have, as it were, plugged in to the global economy. Yet, in the process, many developing countries have had to make painful structural adjustments in their economies at heavy cost to vulnerable sections of their populations. If there is greater overall international economic activity, it is also true that for many developing countries, despite their best efforts, the economic outlook has not been encouraging. The recent Conference of non-aligned countries held at Jakarta issued a renewed call for a new orientation between developed and developing countries whereby constructive dialogue and partnership were emphasized, based on a mutuality of interest and benefit, genuine interdependence and shared responsibility.

A major thrust of this approach has been to work out new practical aspects of international development cooperation which would embrace developed as well as developing countries, the more secure economies as well as those that are more vulnerable. The final communiqué issued earlier this year in Halifax, at the Summit of the seven major industrialized countries, proclaimed their willingness to cooperate with others to develop a new approach to international cooperation and to define the particular contribution expected of the United Nations system to develop such an approach. A vital aspect of this exercise should be the enhancement of cooperation

between the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions.

Calls made earlier for a restructuring of international economic relations and a North-South dialogue have floundered in a sea of slogans. But we must realize that global interdependence has made international cooperation an imperative, not a slogan. The United Nations must assert its part in a more effective new multilateralism.

Almost two decades ago Sri Lanka adopted a liberal free-market economy in order to accelerate economic growth. My Government is taking steps to privatize State-controlled enterprises, in particular utilities and services provided by the Government, and to encourage foreign investment. We intend to benefit from the opportunities arising from the globalization of economic activity.

A number of world conferences have recently been held, covering a series of generic issues which have a direct bearing on the lives of people the world over. These have demonstrated both the promise and the paucity of international cooperation. Agenda 21, produced by the Rio Conference on Environment and Development, is yet to be fully operationalized due to the lack of necessary resources. Last year the International Conference on Population and Development affirmed the central role of the human being in all development and population activities. The World Summit for Social Development, held in March this year in Copenhagen, sought to promote concerted international action to deal with a crucial trio of contemporary concerns: poverty, unemployment and the disintegration of society. The World Conference on Women, in Beijing last month, dealt with a range of issues — political, social, religious and economic — affecting women and adopted a Platform for Action to empower women.

All these conferences have emphasized that responsibility for major global problems needs to be shared and that action to deal with them needs to be taken in concert. Regrettably, if expectations have been great, resources for their realization have been meagre. The political determination necessary to transform commitments into action still appears far less than adequate.

Despite the absence of optimal international cooperation in certain areas, some regional activities have made good progress. In our own region, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. The SAARC Preferential Trade Arrangement has made much headway and is expected to enter into force this year. We look to the future confident of consolidating our gains in a South Asian free-trade arrangement. Sri Lanka, together with our South Asian partners, will explore all avenues to seek and build on common ground and optimize regional cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Indeed, cooperation within, as well as between, regions offers much scope for economic progress and equitable sharing of global wealth. We look forward to greater interregional cooperation to advance this process.

Sri Lanka was privileged to have served the Review and Extension Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to facilitate the adoption of a package of decisions without resort to a vote. While the outcome of the Conference has been widely hailed, it is vital also to emphasize the need for the establishment of a comprehensive disarmament regime to meet the security concerns of all countries, including the non-nuclear-weapon States, through the realization of commitments undertaken under the Treaty and the decisions taken at the 1995 Conference by the nuclear-weapon States. These commitments include the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban Treaty, legally binding assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the unimpeded, non-discriminatory transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction throughout the world.

We have expressed our deep disappointment and concern over the resumption of nuclear testing by some nuclear Powers, which is contrary to the undertakings of utmost restraint entered into at the NPT Conference. We therefore urge that expeditious negotiations be conducted on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, with a view to concluding it in 1996. In this regard, we are happy to support President Clinton's initiative to place the Geneva negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty on a faster track in order to achieve a zero-yield test-ban treaty by 1996. We also note the recent assurance in this respect given by President Chirac of France.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace is an essential part of regional security. The non-aligned countries, including Sri Lanka, have sought to establish conditions of peace, security and stability in the Indian Ocean region. The United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, taking into account current realities, has been considering new, alternative approaches to ensuring peace and security in this vital but volatile region of the world. Sri Lanka, as

Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, has been in consultation with those permanent members of the Security Council that have not been participating in the Committee's work in order to re-enlist their active participation and give fresh impetus to the process of strengthening cooperation in the Indian Ocean region, including in respect of non-military aspects of security.

Sri Lanka's initiative for Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation (IOMAC) has focused on the development of international cooperation in marine affairs in the economic, scientific and technical fields. The recent Mauritius and Perth initiatives on the Indian Ocean have recognized IOMAC's pioneering effort in helping to widen cooperation in the marine sector. The process for the formalization of IOMAC through the ratification of the 1990 Arusha Agreement on the Organization for Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation is being further accelerated in order to provide an effective mechanism for intensifying cooperation, in keeping with the growing aspirations of the countries of the region.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has spawned a variety of studies on the future of the Organization, initiated within as well as outside the United Nations. Working groups of the General Assembly have been busy during recent sessions, studying the financial situation of the Organization, development issues, the Security Council, the Agenda for Peace and other aspects of the United Nations.

The issues are complex. Progress is slow. Decisions are few. A resolution on the strengthening of the United Nations system, patiently negotiated on the initiative of the President of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, was adopted by consensus. There is much to support a coordinated, rational and informed examination of recommendations which seek to strengthen the United Nations and render it a more effective and efficient Organization. A piecemeal approach may not be an effective one, given the complexity of the individual issues involved as well as their interrelationship. We look forward to further work on this initiative next year.

The Security Council has perhaps been the single most contentious United Nations organ under scrutiny. Sri Lanka's own position is that in many respects the Council still reflects power realities that prevailed 50 years ago. There can be no warrant for the perpetuation of exclusive rights without accommodation of other relevant considerations. A substantial increase in the membership of the United Nations, particularly from among developing countries, needs to be more equitably reflected in the composition of the Council as well. Furthermore, there are reasons, at least as compelling as those proclaimed 50 years ago to justify the status conferred at that time on the Council's five permanent members, to now advance the claims of other States that aspire to join the five. These new aspirants to permanent-member status include, reasonably and justifiably in our view, non-aligned countries as well. Regrettably, eligibility claims for membership in the Council continue to be made on assumptions of power, military or economic, and its global or regional projection. But this vitiates basic principles underlying democratic representation and considerations of justice and equity. If regional criteria are considered, then, Asia, Africa and Latin America are either unrepresented or severely under-represented in the present Council. Finally, the veto power, given its untrammelled character and its association with the possession of nuclear weapons, needs, in our opinion, careful, sober review.

The Security Council's methods of work have in the recent past been subject to welcome improvement, particularly in permitting a better exchange of views between Council members and others. There is, however, much more that needs to be done to make the Security Council truly accessible, democratic and responsive to Member States of the United Nations, on whose behalf the Council is meant to act in accordance with Charter principles. A single example relating to the imposition and implementation of sanctions would suffice to indicate the gap between principle and practice. Situations in which sanctions are imposed vary greatly and no uniform rules are applicable. Sanctions cannot be applied with surgical precision to impact exclusively on those at whom they are aimed. Sanctions can thus hurt innocent civilians, affect entire economies and, as the Council itself acknowledges, impact adversely on third countries that are in no way involved in the transgressions of the regime against which sanctions are imposed. Yet decisions by the Council on the imposition of sanctions are not based on prior consultations with the countries concerned, to assess carefully the true impact, extent and reach of such extreme measures. As sanctions are mandatory, all countries are bound to implement them even when they have had no part in the decisions leading to them. In his "Supplement to 'An Agenda for Peace'", the Secretary-General has made a number of useful recommendations relating to the serious problems encountered in the implementation of sanctions. The non-aligned countries have studied these proposals and we await further developments.

Later this month, the United Nations will mark its fiftieth anniversary with a special commemorative meeting. Although the occasion will, by its very nature, embody the highest possible political commitment made by the international community to the United Nations, it must not be seen purely as an opportunity for the Organization to garner a harvest of tributes. Much ails the Organization. Nevertheless, it is Sri Lanka's firm conviction that the membership of the United Nations has within it the means to reinvest in the Organization all it requires to fulfil the principles of the Charter. This would require much more than a symbolic declaration of commitment by each Member State. We owe it to the people we represent to strive diligently in the years to come to make this Organization truly a place where the highest aspirations of humanity can be fulfilled.

**Tentative programme of work**

*Mr. Reyn (Belgium), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

**The Acting President** (*interpretation from French*): I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/50/5, which contains a tentative programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings of the Assembly for the month of October. I wish to point out that this schedule was prepared to facilitate the organization of the work of delegations and to help ensure that the relevant documentation is ready for the discussion of the items in question.

The lists of speakers for all the items listed in document A/INF/50/5 are now open.

The President of the Assembly will in due course announce the dates of the consideration of other agenda items and will keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes.

*The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.*